

# GREEN ECONOMY

This information package is compiled to commemorate World Environment Day, June 5, 2012

## What is a "Green Economy?"

A Green Economy can be thought of as an alternative vision for growth and development; one that can generate growth and improvements in people's lives in ways consistent with sustainable development. A Green Economy promotes a triple bottom line: sustaining and advancing economic, environmental and social well-being.

The prevailing economic growth model is focused on increasing GDP above all other goals. While this system has improved incomes and reduced poverty for hundreds of

millions, it comes with significant and potentially irreversible social, environmental and economic costs. Poverty persists for as many as **two and a half billion people**, and the natural wealth of the planet is rapidly being drawn down. In a **recent global assessment**, approximately 60 percent of the world's ecosystem services were found to be degraded or used unsustainably. The gap between the rich and poor is also increasing – between 1990 and 2005, **income inequality** (measured by the gap between the highest and

lowest income earners) rose in more than two thirds of countries.

The persistence of poverty and degradation of the environment can be traced to a series of market and institutional failures that make the prevailing economic model far less effective than it otherwise would be in advancing sustainable development goals. These market and institutional failures are well known to economists, but little progress has been made to address them.

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### U.S. Embassy Jakarta Mission Statement

Based on mutual respect and shared values, the U.S. Mission works with Indonesia to strengthen democracy, sustain the environment, promote prosperity, enhance understanding and ensure security for our people, our nations, and our region

## About World Environment Day

World Environment Day is an annual event that is aimed at being the biggest and most widely celebrated global day for positive environmental action. World Environment Day activities take place all year round but climax on 5 June every year, involving everyone from everywhere.

World Environment Day celebration began in 1972 and has grown to become the one of the main vehicles through which the UN stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and

encourages political attention and action.

World Environment Day is also a day for people from all walks of life to come together to ensure a cleaner, greener and brighter outlook for themselves and future generations.

The 2012 theme for World Environment Day is Green Economy: Does it include you?

Source: <http://goo.gl/c89O5>  
More info: WED A-Z: <http://goo.gl/djFBe>



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY | 05 JUNE  
Green Economy: Does it include you?

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## What is a "Green Economy?"

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For example, there are not sufficient mechanisms to ensure that polluters pay the full cost of their pollution. There are "missing markets" – meaning that markets do not systematically account for the inherent value of services provided by nature, like water filtration or coastal protection. A "market economy" alone cannot provide public goods, like efficient electricity grids, sanitation or public transportation. And economic policy is often shaped by those who wield power, with strong vested interests, and rarely captures the voice and perspectives of those most at risk.

A Green Economy attempts to remedy these problems through a variety of institutional reforms and regulatory, tax, and expenditure-based economic policies and tools

### What does a Green Economy look like?

The transition to a Green Economy has a long way to go, but several countries are demonstrating leadership by adopting national "green growth" or "low carbon" economic strategies. And there are many examples of successful, large-scale programs that increase growth or productivity and do so in a sustainable manner.

For example:

- In **Mexico City**, crippling

congestion led to a major effort to promote **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**, a sophisticated bus system that uses dedicated lanes on city streets. Significant public investment in the BRT has reduced commuting times and air pollution and improved access to public transit for those less able to afford private cars. This remarkable success is now being replicated in cities across Mexico and has led to investment from the federal government in urban public transit for the first time.

More examples can be found in the recent United Nations Environment Programme's [report on the Green Economy](#)

### How does Green Economy differ from previous efforts to promote sustainability – what is new?

In many ways, Green Economy objectives simply support those already articulated for the broader goal of sustainable development. But this new framing responds to two recent developments.

First, there is a deeper appreciation today by many governments, **companies**, civil society and the **public** that we are reaching planetary limits, not just in terms of greenhouse gas emissions but also in our use of water, land, forests and other natural resources. The environmental and social costs of our current economic model are becoming more and more apparent.

Second, and perhaps even more important, the global recession has led to a reconsideration of key tenets of the current economic model – such as the primacy of growth and the belief in light-touch regulation.

### What are some of the concerns and tensions with the concept of a Green Economy?

One question people ask is "can we afford this?" We're still in the wake of the global financial crisis and many people perceive Green Economy solutions as expensive. The United States is asking itself whether it can afford to put a price on carbon today. Developing countries are concerned that transitioning to a Green Economy will hinder economic growth and the ability to reduce poverty.

Moreover, there will be short-term, nontrivial losses associated with changes in industry and market structure (e.g., a decline of the coal industry and related job losses.) Supporting those actors who will bear the brunt of the transition will be critical to building broad ownership for a Green Economy.

### What are the challenges to a transition to a Green Economy, and what will make it possible?

The principal challenge is how we move towards an economic system that will benefit more people over the long run. Transitioning to a Green Economy will

require a fundamental shift in thinking about growth and development, production of goods and services, and consumer habits. This transition will not happen solely because of better information on impacts, risks or good economic analysis; ultimately, it is about politics and changing the political economy of how big decisions are made.

The problem is vested interests. Those who benefit from the status quo are either overrepresented in or have greater access to institutions that manage natural resources and protect the environment. U.S. climate legislation, for example, was defeated in no small part by resistance from fossil-fuel based energy advocates.

The following steps would help create a more level policy-making playing field:

- Increase public awareness and the case for change.
- Promote new indicators that complement GDP.
- Open up government decision-making processes to the public and civil society.
- Identify and take advantage of political leadership.

Summarized from: <http://goo.gl/SSO1p>

Related links :

<http://goo.gl/vjDpL>

<http://goo.gl/rW7fj>

<http://goo.gl/kkVZ5>

# Resources

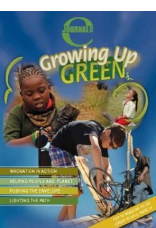
## ARTICLES

**U.S. Harnesses Innovation for Global Development/Kathryn McConnell.** *IIP Digital*, February 2012. This article highlights the progress in using science, technology and innovation to address global challenges by Private sector and government leaders. Read more: <http://goo.gl/MmqN9>

**A Greener Corporate America: Businesses and environmental groups find common ground on climate change/Karin Rives.** *America.gov*, April 26, 2010. This article describes the U.S. Companies' efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Read more: <http://goo.gl/X84YM>

## eJOURNALS

**eJournal USA: Growing Up Green. March 2012**



This issue of eJournal USA explores how young people are leading the way to a cleaner,

greener, more sustainable future. From launching their own environmental organizations to developing alternative energy resources, today's youth have what it takes to make the world a better place. Read more: <http://goo.gl/J4n4C>

**eJournal USA: Climate Action Goes Local. August, 2011**

This publication shows how communities and non-governmental groups

worldwide are initiating programs that counter climate change, and why leadership from local officials and buy-in from local populations and businesses are necessary for such programs to be effective. Read more: <http://goo.gl/5PA0y>

**eJournal USA: The Greening of U.S. Corporations. March 2008**

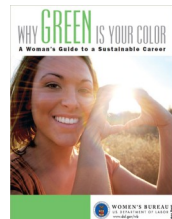


The Greening of U.S. Corporations delves into what those familiar with the history of the environmental movement in the United States might see as a surprising trend: the way U.S. corporations in recent years have embraced environmentally friendly ways of doing business. What prompts a corporation to "go green"?

Read more: <http://goo.gl/H5JDB>

## eBOOK

**Why Green Is Your Color: A Woman's Guide to a Sustainable Career/ U.S.**



Department of Labor, 2012. A Woman's Guide to a Sustainable Career is a comprehensive manual designed to assist women with job training and career development as they enter into innovative and nontraditional jobs. The guide also provides vulnerable women a pathway to higher paying jobs, and serves as a tool to help fight job segregation. It offers women

resources and information they need to enter and succeed in jobs in the emerging green economy. This book is accessible at: <http://goo.gl/6JY0C>

## MULTIMEDIA

**Green Revolution Video Series/ National Science Foundation, May 2010**

These educational videos, each about five minutes long, feature scientists and engineers who are working to develop and improve the use of clean energy sources, new fuels and other energy-related technologies. Each segment explores the research carried out by men and women at the forefront of discovery and innovation related to clean energy, as well as some of the basic science behind their work. Watch the videos at: <http://goo.gl/v5re0>

## REPORTS

**Adapting for a Green Economy: Companies, Communities and Climate Change/UN Global Compact, UN Environment Programme, Oxfam and the World Resources Institute,**



2011. The report provides guidance to business leaders and policymakers and also aims to support the efforts leading up to Rio+20. Full Report is accessible at: <http://goo.gl/5CfdS>

**2011 Global Green Economy Index/ Stakeholder Forum, 2011**

This is a comprehensive analytic tool offering stake-



holders in the green economy a robust system to track, analyze and improve upon both the perceptions

and performance of national green economies. Full Report is accessible at: <http://goo.gl/Ok8nD>

**Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication/ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 2011**

The report demonstrates that the greening of economies is not generally a drag on growth but rather a new engine of growth; that it is a net generator of decent jobs, and that it is also a vital strategy for the elimination of persistent poverty. The report also seeks to motivate policy makers to create the enabling conditions for increased investments in a transition to a green economy. Full Report is accessible at: <http://goo.gl/5gjqX>



Get more resources on the Green Economy related topics from eLibraryUSA, which offers access to around 30 authoritative databases that covers broad range of resources about American society, culture, foreign policy, as well as learning English, health, business, and more. To get access and training on eLibraryUSA please email:

[ircjakarta@state.gov](mailto:ircjakarta@state.gov)

## Top 10 Reasons to Go Green in 2012

### By Road to Rio+20

This is the year for young people around the world to campaign and act on local and global sustainable development issues. Here are 10 very important reasons you should get involved:

#### 1. It's your future!

How old will you be in 2050? The choices and actions we take today will shape the world to come—not just for us, but for future generations as well. Do you have what it takes to leave a better world for your children's children?

#### 2. Rio+20

Brazil will host an important event even before the World Cup and the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro: the **U.N. Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)**. Get involved in sustainable development initiatives now, in the lead-up to this

summit. Help inspire world leaders to chart a path to a cleaner, greener future!

#### 3. Gain experience, make a difference

Improve your job prospects while improving the world! Work in the field of sustainable development to get valuable hands-on experience, as well as positive karma.

#### 4. Join a growing sector

The world is now working toward a low-carbon future, so more and more green jobs are appearing every day. In Germany alone, the number of jobs in the renewable energy sector is expected to **increase by more than 35 percent by 2030** from 2010 levels. Prepare yourself for tomorrow's job market today!

#### 5. Any skill can benefit the cause

What are you good at? Your skills are bound to be useful in sustainable develop-

ment. From conservation, engineering and policy to education, media and research, all kinds of talents and skills are needed.

Make a positive difference by putting your natural talents to work!

#### 6. Tackle causes, not symptoms

Poverty, environmental damage and economic inequality are symptoms of complex, inter-related problems that sustainable development aims to address. Help combat the root causes of these multifaceted problems by getting involved!

#### 7. You are needed now more than ever

We hear stories every day of individuals, communities and nations negatively affected by unsustainable living patterns. There is no better time to act than now!

#### 8. You won't be alone

Sustainable development

may be a relatively new field, but it is very popular. People of all backgrounds work and volunteer to keep the sector running and growing. Get involved now and meet like-minded young people, who play a huge part in the process!

#### 9. Freedom to be creative

It takes positive thinking and lots of imagination to raise awareness and take action on sustainable development issues. Do you aspire to be an inventor, entrepreneur, artist or activist? Promote sustainable development and stimulate your imagination!

#### 10. Fun and adventure

Who said saving the world couldn't be fun? Participate in massive stunts, join an online campaign or create art — all for a good cause. You'll be surprised by what can happen!

Source: <http://goo.gl/kQOOI>

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The IRC collection includes a reference collection, a periodicals section, and access to extensive online commercial-databases.

For details on reference and periodical collections, please check our online catalog at <http://69.63.217.22/U10086Staff/OPAC/index.asp>.

For all IRC information products, including this info package are available online at: <http://jakarta.usembassy.gov/infoproduct.html>

Information queries may be submitted to us by phone, fax, mail, and e-mail. You are also welcome to visit us by appointment for personal research assistance.

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